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□➤ updates ⁉

[image]

WELCOME to ❝ THE LOST VOWS ❞
a warrior cats fanfiction by sochathedragon

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TEASER .
□□➤ ❝ Then all the starry cats looked at each other, determination flashing in their star-laden eyes. When they set their gazes back on Hollowpaw, their eyes were blank and they spoke in unison. "Vows must be lost," they said, their voices an eerie melody.

The calm, sunny clearing vansihed and she found herself in a looming pine forest. Somehow it felt comforting, the embrace of the tall, imposing branches, as if she'd lived here all her life.

As if she were home.

"To create the sixth star," they continued, eyes still blank, whispering in uncanny unison.

The pine forest seemed to sway, and a gust of cold wind

almost knocked Hollowpaw off her paws. Her paws! When she looked down, stars were creeping up into her legs, spreading across her body. Was she dead?

Before she had a chance to recon with this, a six-tipped maple leave floated down gently from the sky. Snow began to fall all around her, making her shiver.

The StarClan cats appeared in front of her again, and walking forward in slow motion, their blank eyes swirling with horrors. In Whiteshadow's empty gaze, she could see the terrifying still bodies of cats she did not know. Dawnkit's eyes showed her loved ones dying. And Half Moon showed her the most terrifying of all: hundreds of tiny kits, wailing in the snow.

Hollowpaw blinked profusely, and their eyes changed back to normal. "And expel the demons from the eye of the hurricane."

Then the StarClan cats vanished along with the pine forest, and she began to fall endlessly in the open sky again. ❞

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WRITING UPDATES .

□□➤ this book has been in process for a while, and hopefully i will complete it and the other books in this series soon.

☀ *completed.*

☾ *in process.*

☁ *up next.*

plot planning for book one ☀
plot planning for sequel books ☾
chapter writing for book one ☾
graphic design ☾
character faceclaims ☾
territory design ☁

transferring chapters to wattpad ☁
chapter writing for sequel books ☁

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TRIGGER WARNINGS .

□□➤ there will be some sensitive topics in this fanfiction, please read with caution.

depression .
suicide .
bullying .
violence .
child death .

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! stay tuned for more updates !

[image]

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a l l e g i a n c e s

ThunderClan

Leader...
Honeystar - Cream, ginger, and white calico she-cat with green eyes

Deputy...
Graybark - Old gray tom with pale yellow eyes

Medicine cat...
Fernwing - Brown tabby she-cat with green eyes and a stump tail (Brackenpaw)

Warriors...

Hollystone - Fluffy black and gray she-cat with green eyes

Brokentuft - White tom with a shredded ear and yellow eyes (Rainpaw)

Flashtooth - Pale brown tabby tom with golden eyes (Owlpaw)

Cloudbirch - Gray tabby tom with brown eyes and a missing toe

Moonflutter - Gray ticked she-cat with amber eyes

Howlrun - Black tom with long legs and brown eyes

Whisperheart - Tortoiseshell she-cat with soft blue eyes and a missing ear

Rabbitfur - Mottled brown tom with green eyes and scars across his back

Thunderbrook - Dark ginger she-cat with sharp blue eyes (Stormpaw)

Morningsleet - Blue-gray tabby she-cat with badger-like stripes on her face and green eyes

Juniperswift - Black and white tom with warm blue eyes

Birdflight - Ginger tabby tom with green eyes (Scarpaw)

Redheart - Fluffy calico tom with amber eyes and short legs (Applepaw)

Boulderpatch - Dark gray tabby tom with blue eyes

Nightfall - Black she-cat with icy blue eyes

Spikebush - Spiky-furred ginger she-cat with black paws and green eyes

Apprentices...

Owlpaw - Gray and brown tabby tom with yellow eyes

Rainpaw - Gray and ginger-spotted tom with yellow eyes

Scarpaw - Scarred brown speckled tabby tom with blue eyes

Applepaw - Ginger she-cat with blue eyes

Stormpaw - Grayish-blue ticked she-cat with pale blue eyes

Brackenpaw - Fluffy ginger tom with green eyes

Queens...

Honeystar - Cream, ginger, and white calico she-cat with green eyes, mother of Juniperswift's kits;
(Hollowkit, a black and white she-kit with pale green eyes)

Turtlesong - Tortoiseshell she-cat with one brown and one blue eye, mother of Howlrun's kits;
(Daisykit, a tortoiseshell she-kit; and Ravenkit, a black she-kit with gray speckles)

Elders...

Duskfang - Graying tortoiseshell tom with amber eyes

Splitspirit - She-cat with one side white with a blue eye and one side gray with an amber eye

ShadowClan

Leader...
Robinstar - Brown tabby tom with green eyes and a stump tail

Deputy...
Wolfshine - Gray and white she-cat with amber eyes

Medicine cats...

Yellowpool - Cream she-cat with blue eyes

Woodrunner - Brown tom with green eyes

Warriors...

Fireneedle - Brown tabby tom with green eyes

Silverwillow - Gray tabby she-cat with pale green eyes

Blossombloom - Black she-cat with blue eyes and shredded ears

Whiskerswift - Gray tom with green eyes

Mountainleap - Grayish-brown she-cat with white paws and blue eyes

Blackflame - Tortoiseshell tom with amber eyes

Lilyfern - White and ginger she-cat with bright green eyes

Stonewing - Sleek gray tom with blue eyes

Dawnbristle - Fluffy gray she-cat with golden eyes

Sungorse - Yellow tabby tom with brown eyes and scars on his nose

Bluespring - Blueish-gray she-cat with green eyes

Briarclaw - Brown and white tabby tom with amber eyes and a missing ear

Lightningslash - Dark ginger tom with yellow eyes

Snowflower - White she-cat with green eyes and scars all across her body

Eagleflight - Brown tom with sharp blue eyes

Apprentices...

Tallpaw - Ginger and white patched tom with green eyes

Flamepaw - Ginger tabby she-cat with icy blue eyes

Queen...
Rainsprout - Dark gray tabby she-cat with green eyes and a stump tail, mother of Eagleflight's kits;
(Marshkit, a brown tom with green eyes; Waterkit, a blue-gray tabby she-cat with blue eyes; and Emberkit, a dark gray tom with blue eyes)

Elders...

Tawnybreeze - Ginger tom with pale blue eyes

Flickerblossom - Tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes

RiverClan

Leader...
Troutstar - Sleek silver speckled tom dark green eyes

Deputy...
Geckofang - Tortoiseshell he-cat with amber eyes

Medicine cat...
Finsplash - light gray tabby she-cat with green eyes

Warriors...

Whiteheart - Fluffy black she-cat with a white streak down her chest and yellow eyes

Bramblemoon - Sleek pale brown tom with green eyes

Bloomshine - Pale brown she-cat with cream highlights and green eyes

Hornetsting - Fluffy black tom with cream paws and ears and amber eyes

Silvernight - Sleek gray speckled she-cat with blue eyes

Grayflurry - Silver tabby tom with green eyes

Cliffbranch - Grayish-brown she-cat with brown eyes and a scarred hind leg

Sparrowlily - Brown tabby she-cat with green eyes (Saltpaw)

Tigerstone - Gray tom with black stripes and yellow eyes (Rosepaw)

Frogstare - Sleek mottled brown tom with green eyes

Mossbrook - Black she-cat with blue eyes

Minnowclaw - Fluffy silver tom with amber eyes

Smallfin - Sleek brownish-gray tabby tom with green eyes

Apprentices...

Saltpaw - Cream tom with green eyes

Rosepaw - Ginger and white she-cat with blue eyes

Queens...

Russetwing - Tortoiseshell and white she-cat with yellow eyes, mother of Smallfin's kits;
(Lichenkit, a gray tabby she-kit with amber eyes; and Twigkit, a white and brown patched tom with green eyes)

Alderbird - Ginger she-cat with green eyes, expecting Tigerstone's kits

Elder...
Foxfall - Graying dark ginger tom with white paws and amber eyes

WindClan

Leader...
Loststar - Pale gray she-cat with one green eye

Deputy...
Poppybird - Ginger and Black spotted she-cat with amber eyes

Medicine cat...
Stoatberry - Black and white tom with blue eyes

Warriors...

Runningfire - Ginger tabby tom with long legs and blue eyes

Mapledawn - Fluffy tortoiseshell she-cat with warm golden eyes

Ratrunner - Thin grayish-brown tom with green eyes

Littledash - Small white tom with blue eyes

Zinniarain - White she-cat with brown speckles and amber eyes

Gustleaf - Sleek gray tom with sharp green eyes

Beescratch - Cream tom with big paws and brown eyes

Puddlebranch - Thin pale brown tabby she-cat with yellow eyes

Wildflower - Tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes

Spottedheart - Calico tom with blue eyes

Grapplepounce - Gray tabby tom with amber eyes

Dapplereed - Gray and black spotted she-cat with green eyes

Apprentices...

Grasspaw - Fluffy white she-cat with green eyes

Weaselpaw - Pale brown tabby tom with amber eyes

Hailpaw - Black tom with blue eyes

Leopardpaw - Cream she-cat with black spots and green eyes

Smokepaw - Black tom with amber eyes

Wishpaw - Sleek gray she-cat with soft blue eyes

Queen...
Heatherblossom - Cream she-cat with bright green eyes, expecting Grapplepounce's kits

Elders...

Redwhirl - Ginger and white tom with amber eyes

Kinkthistle - Matted gray she-cat with pale green eyes

SkyClan

Leader...
Thornstar - Ginger tabby tom with yellow eyes

Deputy...
Willowdawn - Soft gray she-cat with green eyes

Medicine cats...

Mouseclaw - Gray tabby tom with blue eyes

Waspflight - Yellow and white she-cat with dark amber eyes

Warriors...

Flywing - White tom with yellow eyes

Yellowmoor - Fluffy cream and ginger she-cat with pale green eyes

(Meadowpaw)

Woodcrow - Black tom with brown and blue eyes

Fireshine - White and ginger she-cat with amber eyes

Butterflyleap - Sleek tortoiseshell tom with green eyes

Badgerface - Brown tom with dark brown stripes down his muzzle and yellow eyes

Hawktalon - White she-cat with brown patches and amber eyes with scars on one leg

Runningpatch - Black tom with white spots and green eyes

Flutterlark - Sleek tan tabby she-cat with blue eyes (Tinypaw)

Burnwhisker - Calico she-cat with amber eyes

Birchbriar - White tom with green eyes

Quietbush - Sleek gray tabby tom with yellow eyes

Goldenstrike - Large golden tom with amber eyes

Featherflare - Gray she-cat with ginger paws and tail with blue eyes

Squirrelnose - Ginger tabby tom with a big nose and brown eyes

Apprentices...

Meadowpaw - Gray and white she-cat with green eyes

Tinypaw - Small brown tom with green eyes

Elders...

Swiftlight - Gray tom with yellow eyes

Lostear - White she-cat with one brown and one blue eye and only one ear

Ferngrowl - Black tom with sharp green eyes

p r o l o g u e

The night was warm and humid, and fireflies danced through the trees, glowing softly. The glistening forest was alive with the buzzing of insects and the songbird symphony. The sun had just set, leaving beautiful shadows on the rosy pink clouds rolling above.

A lime-green firefly whisked over to a meadow and settled in the long grass right beneath a small white she-cat, illuminating her grim face.

She moved gracefully down the slope and settled herself neatly on one of the seven smooth rocks in the center of the clearing. Her green eyes surveyed the clearing, hoping that they would come. They *must* come.

The fading light of day was gone, and stars were appearing all around her, lighting up the ones faintly glowing in her pelt. She sighed, a noise so small only she herself could hear it. *They aren't coming.*

She heaved herself to her paws, feeling as old as she had been when she died. She hadn't felt this way in so long.

Dejected, she padded to the edge of the clearing, where she stole one last glance at the seven rocks where she was supposed to meet the others. It was still empty. She let one tear slide down her cheeks as she realized that this had been her last chance to save her home. She couldn't save them anymore.

"Wait."

The white she-cat whipped around, her emerald eyes flashing in the dark. "You came."

A sleek silver tom slid into view, his eyes sparkling with worry. "I

knew it was the right thing to do."

The white she-cat merely dipped her head to him. Words couldn't express how grateful she was. She gestured to the rocks, where she was already nearing. "Sit."

He nodded and padded softly to sit next to her.

"So," she whispered, afraid to speak the words, "the rest aren't coming, are they?"

The silver tom sighed and looked at her mournfully. "I don't know. I didn't see any of them. But we can still fix this, you know. We can help them—we can even let them thrive. We don't need the others, especially if they–"

He was cut off by the thrumming of pawsteps rushing toward them. The white she-cat felt a burst of hope set fire to her heart, which felt lighter than it had in years. *They're coming. They haven't forgotten.*

A dark gray tom broke through the trees and raced up to greet her. "I'm here!" he gasped, panting. "I didn't let you down!"

She smiled warmly, but she was secretly worried about him. He was even more transparent than she was, which made her realize how long it had been since she'd been among the living. Some cats still remembered her, but almost none remembered the tom.

He was terrifyingly close to fading, and it seemed like he knew it, too. *He probably wouldn't be here if he wasn't,* she thought. *I suppose he wants to live his final days doing good, instead of running around chasing rabbits like all the other StarClan cats.* She shook herself. *I need to stop thinking like that. Of course he wants to help—it was his home, too.*

She was whisked out of her thoughts by the arrival of a ginger tabby tom, a black she-cat, a pale gray tom, and a pale brown tabby she-cat. They all looked out of breath, but they beamed at her, seeming to understand that they hadn't made a mistake coming here.

The black she-cat was the first to saunter down to one of the seven rocks. *Of course. Shadowstar was always all business.* The pale gray tom rolled his eyes and joined her. The white she-cat couldn't help the sliver of rage that coursed through her as he smiled at her. She acted like she forgave him, but nothing could erase the carnage that he had started. *You're my ally, Skystar, but not my friend.*

Once all of the cats had gathered, she began, trying to hide the quiver in her mew. "You need to help me, all of you."

Windstar smirked. "And, why else, do you suppose, would we be here?"

Thunderstar glared at her.

"Please, let me explain." She looked them each in the eye, and she was relieved when Riverstar and Gray Wing smiled at her in an approving manner. "I know you think that StarClan only deals with Clan problems, but these cats need our help. The Tribe is falling apart. If we could just–"

Shadowstar cut her off. "Not a chance. We'll just get Clan cats killed. Our days in the Tribe are long gone; we have new responsibilities now."

Gray Wing hissed, "So, now that you have a new home, you'll just forget about your old one?" The white she-cat had never seen that kind of fire in his eyes. It gave her hope.

Shadowstar flinched, but didn't retort.

Windstar sighed. "I don't want to leave innocent cats to die, but it's just going to get more cats killed."

Skystar purred in agreement. "I always thought SkyClan's borders should stay closed, and I don't see why that should change now."

She let out a choking noise. Only two of them agreed with her. At this rate, all her descendants were on a path to certain death. She had to convince these cats to help her.

The white she-cat glanced at Thunderstar, who had stayed silent,

soaking up each word. Finally he stood up and gave her a mournful look. "I'm sorry, but I don't want ThunderClan cats to be hurt on a mission for cats they've never met."

She drew in a breath. *I thought they'd say yes. They were supposed to say yes. Why didn't they say yes?*

Breathing in, she surveyed them. There must be a way to reach them. Maybe if she called on a bigger council...

She caught Gray Wing's eye as he flicked his tail at her. Confused, she looked down to where he had pointed at.

Her paws. They were barely visible. She was being forgotten. She'd be gone soon, and so would all the cats that stood before her. Suddenly, she knew what to say. She could feel the words tumble out of her mouth like a cascading waterfall. "You won't be around much longer. None of us will. Would you rather be cowards and not help cats in need, or would you rather spend your last days saving The Tribe of Rushing Water?" She took a deep breath and continued. "I know that it may take time and energy, and you have more important things to deal with, but when you take your last breath before you fade—and there is no afterlife for the afterlife—you'll be glad you spent the last few moons doing something heroic. So. Are you going to be cowardly or are you going to be brave?"

Silence.

Did it work?

She watched their expressions change from offended to contemplative to remorseful. She felt her chest well with emotion—she was really going to save her Tribe.

Skystar stood up regally and looked her in the eye. "You're right, Half Moon. My vote's in. Let's save our home."

heyyyy, thanks for reading this far! Okay, so, the next chapter is going through some editing and will be released on the same day that Taylor Swift's new album is coming out! (I'M SO EXCITED!! WHEEEEE)

o n e

Hollowkit popped her eyes open and scrambled out of bed, eager to see the camp one more time through puny kit eyes. The nursery looked way too small now, and she had to duck to exit. Tonight she'd duck through the exit as an apprentice.

She clambered down the trunk of the hollowed-out tree that was the ThunderClan camp and leaped the last few feet with ease. The whole camp seemed smaller now, and she wondered if she was growing too fast. *Stormpaw and Brackenpaw never complain about the camp not fitting them anymore! Is there something wrong with me?*

She sighed. *Well, besides the obvious.*

Hollowkit bent her head down to snatch up a big juicy squirrel from the prey pile and dashed back through the nursery, where her mother was blinking open her eyes to greet her. "Good timing," Honeystar purred. "I was wondering when my brave little kit would come back with her catch."

Hollowkit rolled her eyes. "Come on! I'm eight moons old! I should be a third into my apprenticeship by now! I am *not* a kit!" She scoffed, but dropped the squirrel down for her mother to take a bite.

Honeystar chuckled wryly. "If you weren't a kit, wouldn't you be in the apprentices' den right not with your brother and sister?"

Her mother's retort stung like salt in a wound, but she held her head high and laughed. She couldn't show weakness—she was going to be an apprentice now. "That was entirely your fault," she huffed.

Honeystar howled with laughter. "Oh, sweetheart, I could have done much worse. You can't do those things without punishment!"

Hollowkit gave a humph. "But now I'm going to be a warrior after

Stormpaw and Brackenpaw! It just isn't fair," she muttered, scuffing the ground unhappily. *Welp. I failed to keep my cool, too,* she realized with a sigh.

"I know you wanted to train with your littermates, but what you did wasn't exactly *good*, remember?"

She could remember all too clearly.

Four moons old, with more energy than a fox in a fit. She wasn't a bad kit, but she was just *so bored* all couped up in the camp.

So was it *really* her fault when she sneaked off in the night and scared a patrol half to death?

Okay, maybe it was. But Hollowkit was so twitchy every night, just because she couldn't get enough exercise with her wimpy sister and herb-obsessed brother never wanting to playfight with her.

Hollowkit's sister was kind and caring, but Stormpaw had always completely worshiped the Warrior Code, and decided that Hollowkit was a Codebreaker just for being a bit rowdy. Stormpaw, though she looked perfect in everyone's eyes, (especially their mother's) was a demon to Hollowkit. Whenever she did something that could barely even be called 'annoying,' Stormpaw would flip out, saying that Hollowkit was a disgrace to her family and that she should be better because she was the leader's daughter. And when Hollowkit tried to talk to Stormpaw about it, her response would be, "Oh, grow *up* already!" And somehow, nobody ever saw who Stormpaw really was. All any cat saw was Honeystar's Perfect Daughter.

Brackenpaw was only a bit better. He was a good brother, and he had an arsonry of jokes ready for any occasion, but he dreamed of being a medicine cat. He had always said that medicine cats heal, not hurt, and refused to ever playfight with her. But Hollowkit didn't hate him for it. After all, he'd only wanted to become a medicine cat because Dawnkit died.

Dawnkit was the only littermate that Hollowkit had gotten along with—the one who was funny, brave, daring, energetic, and loyal.

She had all her siblings' good traits and everyone loved her. She could slay any moth that dared come near her bedding.

But she hadn't been able to slay greencough.

And Brackenpaw was never the same. Up until she died, he had wanted to be a warrior, just like his sisters. But Dawnkit's death had shaken him, and he for some reason felt responsible for not saving her. He had vowed publicly, to everyone in the nursery, that he would never let another cat die on his watch. He'd train as a medicine cat and would keep the whole Clan safe. So far, he'd kept his promise.

"Hollowkit! Earth to Hollowkit!" A ginger shape appeared next to her, startling her away from her thoughts.

She smiled at him. "Hey, Brackenpaw! How's herb sorting?"

He grinned. "As fun as a tree full of rouges!"

She giggled. Brackenpaw was always a joy to be around. "Well, good? I don't know quite how fun that is!" She shook her pelt and added, "Now, what did you come here to say? I know you didn't just pop in to scare me to death. Were you coming to congradulate me on becoming an apprentice today?"

"Well, I just wanted to drop by and tell you that the squirrel you're eating was caught by a StarClan cat—of *course* I came to congradulate you!" He flicked her ear playfully. "I'm sure you'll get the best mentor ever. Be sure to crush Stormpaw in battle training!"

Hollowkit grimaced, hopefully enough to convince him that she would ever expect that to happen. *Not like I'd ever catch up. Stupid little stunt I pulled.*

Unfortunately for her, Brackenpaw had a brain for medicine—basically, he was smarter than everyone else. And he saw right through her. "Hey, I'm sure you'll catch up."

She stammered, "No, no—I'm fine. I'm sure I'll catch up. Like, really, really, really soon. I'll do amazing!" *Please leave me alone. I can't deal with this right now.*

He tilted his head and raised his eyebrows. "We both know that I know that's not true and you don't feel that way." Hollowkit gave a gusty sigh, but he continued, "So I'll leave you alone. But please don't be so hard on yourself."

Hollowkit gave him a weak smile. *I really want to, Brackenpaw. I'd love to. But stupid tiny kit me was dumb and now everyone thinks I'm an idiot. It's rubbed off.*

He leaned in and whispered loudly in her ear, "I had actually considered going with you, when you snuck out. Scaring that patrol was genius!"

Sure, sure. Then you seemed horrified and outraged when they dragged me back. Denied any knowledge and let me take all the blame. Hollowkit gave him her hardest glare. Then she chided herself, biting her lip in annoyance. *I know better. I'd have done the same thing.*

But Brackenpaw had seen her sharp look and flinched away, a mournful look in his eyes. He opened his mouth to say something, but—

"*Ahem!*" They both whirled around innocently to face Honeystar, who was skeptically raising an eyebrow at Brackenpaw.

Brackenpaw then decided that his paws were very interesting.

Honeystar sighed. "Alright, enough of that. It's in the past," she said, with a significant look at Hollowkit. "Now, do you actually want to eat the squirrel Juniperswift caught just for you?"

Hollowkit perked up. "Father caught it for me?"

Her mother purred. "*Just* for you." She nudged the limp prey towards Hollowkit. "Go on."

She snatched it up gratefully and dashed back into the clearing. Brackenpaw loped after her, his fluffy orange pelt bouncing along. She gave him a sly smile.

"Oh, dear." He gave an exaggerated sigh, but Hollowkit knew he

would have to agree with her. "What now, you little hooligan?"

She cursed silently. *Gloat about it, will you? I'm not* that *much smaller than you!*

She shook her pelt. *Apprentices have to be less emotional than kits*, she chided herself. "The prey pile is full! Full enough to hide in..." He didn't respond, so she raised an eyebrow impatiently. "Well?"

Brackenpaw smirked at her. "There are a lot of problems with that plan... One of the many reasons I can think of is—"

"Are you coming or not?"

He chuckled. "I finished sorting my herbs... No harm in it, I suppose!"

With a nod, she dashed out of the nursery, leaping swiftly over the barrier and scrambling down the tree to the forest floor.

The prey pile was in the center of the tree trunk, leaving enough room for cats to stretch and share tongues around it. The prey was abundant today, and Hollowkit would easily fit inside. "Brackenpaw, are you coming?" she asked, her tail twitching impatiently as her brother scrambled down the wood.

He sighed and cuffed her ear playfully. "Ever heard of something called 'patience?'" Brackenpaw asked. "I was *fifteen seconds* behind you."

"And that's fifteen seconds of prank-planning wasted," Hollowkit retorted, rolling her eyes. "Now. You go pretend to groom yourself in the corner over there. When someone approaches my hiding spot, you make the worlds biggest yawn, got it?"

Brackenpaw demonstrated his understanding by flopping down in the corner and beginning to wash himself.

She dove into the prey pile and smothered herself in tasty morsels. *Why, oh why, did I choose* this *prank? I might just drown myself with how much my mouth is watering!* She smothered a giggled and smoothed down her fluffy fur, awaiting her victim.

After a few minutes of mind-numbing boredom, she heard pawsteps by the entrance. A large yawn erupted from her brother. She waited five seconds, and as a plump squirrel was being lifted from the pile, she sprang up and yelled, "Invasion! Rah!"

A gray-blue ticked she-cat leaped back, her eyes flashing with confusion. "Ack! StarClan above!" she shrieked.

It took approximately three seconds for Stormpaw to recover.

She gave Hollowkit a very painful whack over the ear, which abruptly stopped her giggling. Stormpaw, instead of being mildly amused, as Hollowkit would've expected, was seething with rage. "Hollowkit! Why in the world would you do that?" she growled, face flushed with fury. (and a bit of embarrassment, which might have come from Brackenpaw's uncontrollable giggles) "When will you ever, *ever* grow up?"

Before Hollowkit could respond, Stormpaw stalked off and clambered up the tree faster than Hollowkit could believe.

Her sister's words stung more than her ear, and Hollowkit felt an emptiness inside that she had not experienced for moons. The feeling of pure, unrelenting shame. Tears pricked at her eyes, a stinging heat that made her pelt burn. Perhaps Stormpaw was right. *Will I ever grow up?*